



# Home of the future

**Y**OUR short term-contract has just concluded, and you have been asked to move on-site for your next employer. At best, you can expect financial security for a year, due to your partner's on-line business.

Housing costs have gone through the roof and who knows where you will be in a few months time? To top it all off, the economic-rationalist robots in the accounting department of your new firm refuse to pay rental costs.

It was with these visions of the next millennium that architectural firms, AlsoCAN and Multiplicity constructed their Slinky House for the Museum of Victoria's Home of the Future competition.

Endorsed by the Royal Australian Institute of Architecture, the competition was held to encourage debate about the form of personal living arrangements in the future. Entrants were asked to submit designs for an urban living space in 2021.

Consisting of a helical framework of recycled plastic, an outer layer of Goretex and suction pads that attach to existing buildings, the slinky house incorporated the ideas of constrained urban space, en-



**Slinky House:** Winner of the Museum of Victoria's Home of the Future competition.

vironmental sustainability and custom-design.

Forget scanning the housing markets for a permanent dwelling. Pack up your portable, environmentally friendly, tailor-made slinky and head off to work in the heat of the Sahara desert or urban-grit of New York.

While a standardised structure offers reduced production

costs, the collapsible floor plates allow for personal expression. Kitchen, bathroom and bedroom modules and furniture can be designed individually to compress into the floor.

Environmentally, the five helical tubes or "slinkies" would recycle waste and water, as well as carrying power and communication services from an outside source. Solar power also is utilised through the panels located on the rooftop.

All three architects agree that people have psychological attachments to aspects of a solid home. Nomadic working lifestyles will not diminish the desire of a sense of home.

"As housing becomes more expensive, people are going to have to buy off the shelf. This provides a cheap option that can be tailored to your own needs," said Jane McDougall of AlsoCAN Architects.

AlsoCAN architects David Beynon, Jane McDougall and Andrew Morant are at 455 Swan St, Richmond. Phone: 9421 3433. Multiplicity architect, Tim O'Sullivan, and interior designer, Sioux Clark, are at 337 Brunswick Rd, Brunswick. Ph: 9388 0790.

— LEELA DE KRETZER



# Home of the Future Competition

By Rosie Agar

**Imagine you are an urban professional in the year 2021. The fluidity of the workforce means it is no longer possible to justify your leafy inner-suburban address. In order to survive in the ultra-rationalist 21st century, you, your partner and your two children constantly have to relocate across town, across the country and across the globe.**

According to winners of Museum Victoria's \$15,000 Home of the Future architectural competition, the 'Slinky House' is the answer to living as an urban nomad in the 'information age'.

Designed by Melbourne-based architectural firms Also/CAN P/L and Multiplicity, the Slinky House is a brightly coloured tubular shaped house inspired by the form of a children's slinky toy. The Slinky House is fully collapsible and easily transportable on the back of a truck. The design is 'highly tuned' environmentally and features a solar panel and a hydroponic vegetable garden on its roof and a built-in reticulated recycled water system.

The judges congratulated the winners for their design which "slips between categories of buildings, decoration, street furniture and even gaudy paper lantern. Its amusing form... highlights its potential as an easily assembled, compact and totally portable house that is one solution to deal with the mobility of future populations whose only permanent address is their website."

The Home of the Future competition was co-ordinated by Museum Victoria's Technology Program to encourage debate about what forms our personal living spaces will take in the future. Contrary to the popular assumption that museums are only repositories for relics from our past, the primary focus of the Technology Program is to look at the impact future technologies will have on society and our everyday lives.

The competition received entries from both practising and student architects and generated considerable

interest overseas with entries coming from as far afield as Spain. Entries were judged by a leading panel including renowned futurist, Peter Ellyard, and Melbourne architect, John Denton.

Honourable Mentions were given to three other entries including a design for an organic house called the Vegetal House by Victorian architects Simon and Freda Thornton. Other Honourable mentions were received by Victoria's Ross Ramus Architects, and Western Australian architect Gavan Reilly.

The winning entries can be seen on Museum Victoria's Internet website at [www.mov.vic.gov.au/technology/competition/](http://www.mov.vic.gov.au/technology/competition/)



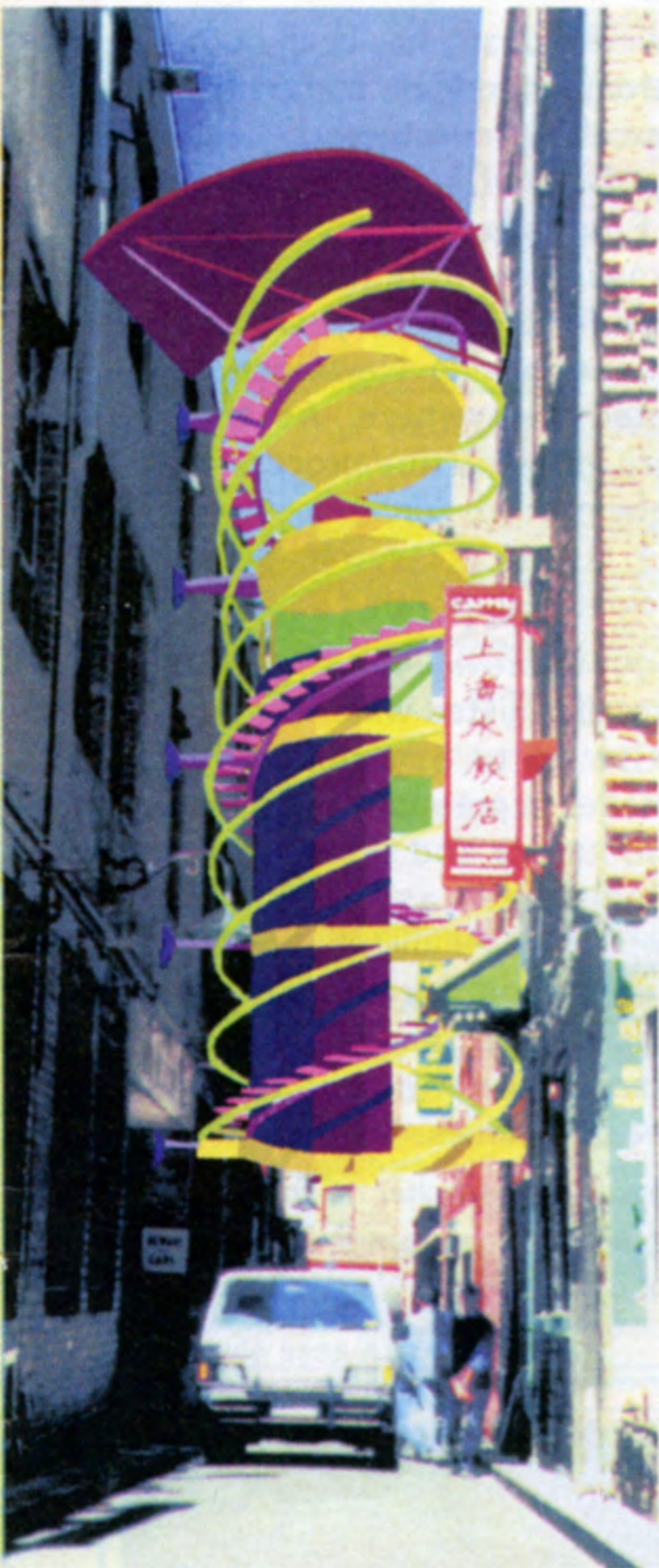
The Slinky House designed by Melbourne architectural firms Also/CAN Pty Ltd and Multiplicity. Winner of Museum Victoria's Home of the Future Competition 1998. Photograph courtesy of Museum Victoria



# Slinky lives

The Slinky toy – that bundle of silver coil which tumbled down steps in the 1970s – is back, updated for the 1990s. It's been the inspiration for a futuristic house.

Imagine life in 2021. Your abode is a spiralling mobile home which can be assembled in a rainforest or an



inner-city lane.

That was the winning design of Museum Victoria's \$15,000 Home of the Future competition.

The Slinky House by Victorian architectural firm AlsoCAN P/L and Multiplicity was selected from 30 national entries.

It doesn't touch the ground and sticks itself onto existing structures, trees or buildings, and can be packed up and put on the back of a truck to be taken from one site to another. Urban nomads, eat your heart out.

A competition judge, architect John Denton, believes that 21 years from now we'll still have bedrooms, bathrooms and living rooms, but the exterior of a home will be more daring.

The Slinky House's chameleon aspect appealed to him. "As an object, it slips between categories of building, decoration, furniture and even gaudy paper lantern. It's an amusing form, a reference to a popular mass toy. It is an easily assembled, compact and totally portable house

– one solution to deal with the mobility of future populations whose only future address will be their web site."

– Georgina Jerums



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|----------------------------|--|
| Thursday 27 May            | A tour of selected venues to appreciate their dramatic interiors designs |
| Tuesday 15 June            | Melbourne Museum job walk & networking luncheon                          |
| Wednesday 16 June          | Rob Adams, Director of City Projects, City of Melbourne presentation     |
| Friday 25 June             | Sanctuary Lakes Job Walk (15 mins from Melbourne)                        |
| Monday 12 July             | CEO Bassett Engineering, Kate Costello, presentation                     |
| Friday 15 - Sun 17 Oct     | Sydney trip including tours of the Olympic and Waterfront developments   |
| Friday 30 July - Sun 1 Aug | Ski Weekend at Mount Buller  |

If you are interested in any of the above events, particularly the Ski or Sydney trips, please contact Jennifer Troy for further details: phone 9347 4555, mobile 0418 575 809, fax 9347 2483, email [jennifer.troy@multiplex.com.au](mailto:jennifer.troy@multiplex.com.au)

### WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR PARTY

This was our first big social event for the year.

In previous years we had the traditional Christmas Party. As Christmas time is usually frantic, this year we decided to do something different and have a "WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR PARTY" as a way to kick start the year.

Held on the 4th February the night was a great success. People from different sectors of the construction industry attended the evening.

Door prizes were awarded throughout the evening creating a little excitement. All in all a fun time.

I would like to thank all those who attended and Maddock Lonie & Chisholm Lawyers for generously allowing NAWIC to use their conference room and facilities for the party.

### "NAWIC HAVE YOUR SAY"

was held on 16th February 1999. The open forum session encouraged members to express their ideas and make suggestions on the future activities and direction of NAWIC. This was a fruitful event as it gave the Victorian Chapter board new ideas from fresh minds. It was an opportunity to meet members and recruit support for the NAWIC Victorian Board and Sub committees.

A special thank you to Ove Arup Consulting Engineers who supplied NAWIC a venue for the evening.

### SLINKY HOUSE

#### **Radical housing design wins Museum Victoria's 'Home of the Future' architectural competition**

Where will the building industry be in the year 2021? NAWIC member, Jane McDougall, is looking to the future with her involvement in AlsoCAN and Multiplicity's prize-winning design for Museum Victoria's "Home of the Future". She is currently celebrating with her partners, David Beynon and Andrew Morant of AlsoCAN Architects, Tim O'Sullivan and Sioux Clark of Multiplicity, and Michael Pablo of Isolated Enterprise.

'Slinky House' is a transportable urban housing unit designed as a flexible shelter for the 'information age'. 'Slinky House' is a brightly colored, suspended, slinky-shaped tube house. It can be customised with collapsible built-in shelves, cupboards, furniture and space dividers, and features a solar panel, hydroponic vegetable garden on its roof and also has a built-in reticulated recycled water system. Can you imagine yourself constructing, customising or living in the component parts of the 'Slinky House'?

Jane reports: Museum Victoria's competition expands beyond the day to day issues of design and construction, to engage in speculating about the future of living/working and of planning / designing our cities. The competition brief called for the design of a home for a professional couple with two children in the year 2021.

For two young architectural firms, to project a way of living into the future is to envision our own eventual working environment. In our eyes, it is only a short step from the current trend for outsourcing work skills to a future of a nomadic workforce. The nature of work for urban professionals in the year 2021 may require a mobile existence, free to hunt and gather employment opportunities whenever they can. The challenge was to design a secure nuclear hub for them to brave a swiftly changing world. No longer prepared to relocate from one impersonal living space to another, future dwellers can choose a new form of housing, the compactable 'Slinky House'.

The 'Slinky House' is designed as an adaptable, readily transportable vehicle for living. It proposes a system of standardised, yet customisable components within an expandable helical frame that can slot into almost any environment, enabling the inhabitants to boldly go wherever they are in demand in the global marketplace.

This model of the home of the future is non-site specific, and can be tuned to a variety of urban or rural environments. It can be positioned in under-utilised public spaces; straddling lanes, suspended from office towers or fly overs, appropriating rooftops, and forming a symbiotic or parasitic relationship with surrounding buildings and services. Or it can exist in isolated work environments self-sufficiently, be they on a mining settlement or within a war zone.

Its modular and prefabricated components can be tailored to facilitate the personal expression of its occupants lives, continuing a sense of belonging within the uncertainties of the ultra-rationalist 21st century.

**Visit [www.mov.vic.gov.au/technology/competition](http://www.mov.vic.gov.au/technology/competition) to view the winning entries.**